

VZCZCXRO0277
OO RUEHCHI RUEHCN RUEHDT RUEHHM
DE RUEHML #0572 0750854
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 160854Z MAR 09
FM AMEMBASSY MANILA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3516
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS IMMEDIATE
RHMCSUU/FBI WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RHHMUNA/CDRUSPACOM HONOLULU HI IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 000572

NOFORN
SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/16/2019
TAGS: [MARR](#) [MCAAP](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [RP](#) [MASS](#)
SUBJECT: MILITARY OPERATION AGAINST SUSPECTED ICRC HOSTAGE
TAKERS

REF: MANILA 247-KIDNAPPED RED CROSS WORKERS BEGIN
FOURTH WEEK WITH TERRORIST GROUP

Classified By: Political Counselor Thomas B. Gibons, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) On March 16, Philippine forces launched a combined operation on Jolo island in the southern Philippines against Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) terrorists suspected of kidnapping three members of the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) on January 15. The Swiss, Italian, and Filipino nationals were kidnapped after an ICRC prison visit in Jolo City and taken into the nearby jungle (reftel). The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) have been attempting to locate the position of Albader Parad, a top ASG leader thought to have masterminded the kidnappings, for the last two months. U.S. and Philippine reports suggest that the hostages may have been separated into two groups, with Parad maintaining control over the Swiss and Italian nationals, but the Philippine media reported that all three hostages were in the vicinity of the Parad camp when the operation started.

12. (C) Elements of the Philippine Army's U.S.-trained Light Reaction Company (LRC) conducted surveillance on the camp of Albader Parad, a top ASG leader, for several hours on March 15 and 16 and determined the hostages were located in the camp. Combined units of the Philippine Armed Forces initiated a raid against the compound in the late morning, led by infantry and supported by artillery. Preliminary reports are that an LRC sniper team may have wounded or killed Parad prior to the start of the rescue operation, and AFP units are attempting to confirm Parad's status. Post will continue to monitor the ongoing situation and report appropriately.

Visit Embassy Manila's Classified SIPRNET website:
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eap/manila/index.cfm>

You can also access this site through the State Department's
Classified SIPRNET website:
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/>
KENNEY